Committee regarding limiting the maximum time span of pilot projects to twgle months in so far as the latest letter of intent to M/s. U.S. West India is concerned; and

(b) if so, what are the techno-economic consideration for such a decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM); (a) and (b) No Sir. Duration of pilot projects depends upon the type of technology to be proved. As such, time span will vary from case. *to* case.

Intra-Circle STD and long distance trunk services

391 SHRI E. BALANANDAN; Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be Pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the nomenclature-'lntra-Circle' STD which finds mention in the tender documents for basic telecom services, is a new con cept which was not there in the New Telecom. Policy document;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the New Telecom Policy did not envisage the opening of STD and long distance trunk services to the private operators, irrespective of whether they are 'intra-citlcV or Inter-circle;" and

(c) if so, what are the considerations for Such a deperiure from the NTP?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (c) Sir, Guidelines on the National Telecom. Policy envisage that the private operators will be allowed to set up long distance network within a circle. As such, the STD calls within the circle between the operators subscribers can be conveyed over operators network.

Malfunctioning of Telephone Services in Dhanbad

392. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased it-state:

(a) whether Government have received any complaints about the malfunctioning of telephone services in and around Dhanbad District of Bihar;

(b) if so, what action has been taken so far;

(c) whether looking into the gravity of the situation, Government would order a public inquiry by an impartial authority into the functioning of telephone services in Dhanbad; and

(d) if not, what measures Government propose to take so that telephone ser vices in Dhanbad District work to the satisfaction of consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The old strowger exchanges have been replaced by Electronic Exchanges at Saraidhele, Dhanbad ad Chirunda.

(c) The services have now improved after replacement of old exchanges. As such, no investigation is necessary.

(d) Does not arise, in view of (c) above.

Speed Post services in Maharashtra

393. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: DR- SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the speed post services in Maharashtra are running in losses:

(b) if so, what is being done to better the speed post services;

(c) if not, what is the profit earned during the last three years on the speed post services in Maharashtra;